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TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 04183 131416Z

53

ACTION SS 70

INFO: OCT 01, CCO 00, SSO 00, NSCE 00, USIE 00, CIAE 00, /071 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9508

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 4183

LIMDIS

SUBJ: IRAQ: SOVIET EFFORTS TO PENETRATE MIDDLE  
EAST: IRAN'S NEED FOR ADEQUATE MILITARY  
ESTABLISHMENTS.

REF: TEHRAN 4174

1. SHAH OPENED BY SAYING HE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED BY IRAQ  
SITUATION AND SOVIET EFFORTS TO GAIN POSITION OF PRIMARY  
INFLUENCE IN THAT COUNTRY. WHEREAS AT PRESENT SOVIETS ARE  
SUPPLYING LARGELY DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT TO UAR, THEY ARE  
EQUIPPING IRAQ WITH OFFENSIVE ARMAMENTS INCLUDING AIRCRAFT,  
COMAR MISSILE VESSELS, AND OTHER OFFENSIVE HARDWARE.  
THIS IS GIVING IRAQ OFFENSIVE CAPABILITY WHICH SOVIETS  
MIGHT AT SOME FUTURE TIME WISH TO EXPLOIT IT THEY  
SUCCEED IN THEIR EFFORTS TO HAVE IRAQI COMMUNISTS PARTICIPATE  
IN A FUTURE IRAQ GOVERNMENT-- A STEP THAT WOULD LEAD TO  
SOVIET DOMINATION OF IRAQ. HE SAID THERE IS PRESENTLY IN  
IRAQ A SOVIET NAVAL MISSION OF SEVERAL HUNDRED AND THAT ONLY  
A WEEK OR SO AGO 170 IRAQI NAVAL PERSONNEL WENT TO SOVIET  
UNION FOR TRAINING. GIVEN IRAQ'S VERY SHORT SEA COAST AND ITS  
STRICTLY LIMITED TERRITORIAL WATERS, FURNISHING OF MISSILE-  
FIRING VESSELS, ETC., IS MOST SINISTER, PARTICULARLY SINCE  
SUCH OFFENSIVE CAPABILITY IS NOT NEEDED, IN VIEW OF PRESENT  
MODEST ARRAY OF IRANIAN AND OTHER NAVAL STRENGTH IN GULF.  
AMONG OTHER THINGS, SOVIETS DOUBTLESS LAYING GROUNDWORK FOR  
PORT FACILITIES IN IRAQ WHICH WOULD ENABLE THEM TO AUGMENT  
SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE GULF, WHICH HAD BEEN INCREASINGLY  
EVIDENT IN THE LAST 18 MONTHS. HAVING BUILT UP A SUBSTANTIAL  
FORCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN OF SOME 70 VESSELS, SOVIETS ARE

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23

ALLEN  
BERGSTEN  
CHAPIN

HOLDRIDGE  
LEITCHER  
LIND F  
MORRIS  
SANDERS  
SCHNEIFELDT  
VARY  
WATTS

Att to Saunders -  
Kissinger memo 10/14/69.  
Sup: President's  
Wednesday Briefing



*Department of State*

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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 04183 131416Z

IN PROCESS OF LAYING GROUNDWORK FOR BUILD-UP OF NAVAL FORCES IN THE GULF. I COMMENTED I HAD HEARD RUMORS SOVIETS WERE PLANNING TO GIVE IRAQ COMARS, HAD NOT HEARD CONFIRMATION VESSELS HAD ACTUALLY BEEN DELIVERED. SHAH REPLIED VESSELS HAD BEEN DELIVERED, BUT SOVIET MISSILES NOT RPT NOT YET FURNISHED. HE MENTIONED THAT RECENTLY HE HAD SENT INTELLIGENCE OFFICER TO LONDON WHO HAD COORDINATED ESTIMATES OF IRAQI STRENGTH WITH BRITISH INTELLIGENCE AND THAT IRANIAN ESTIMATES COINCIDED VERY CLOSELY WITH BRITISH.

2. HE SAID HE HAD "NEEDED" THE SOVIETS ABOUT THEIR SUPPLYING OFFENSIVE WEAPONS TO IRAQ AND THAT SUCH ACTION NOT ONLY SUPPORTED IRAQIS IN THEIR DEFENSE OF A COLONIAL-IMPOSED TREATY (SHATT-AL-ARAB), BUT WAS ALSO INCONSISTENT WITH SOVIET DECLARATION OF FRIENDSHIP WITH IRAN. HOWEVER, SOVIETS HAD WAFFLED AND GIVEN NO SATISFACTORY ANSWER.

3. IN LIGHT OF MILITARY BUILD-UP IN IRAQ, WITH ATTENDANT THREAT TO PERSIAN GULF AND POSSIBLE FUTURE UNFRIENDLY EFFORTS BY RADICAL ARAB STATES TO UNSEAT MODERATE ARAB GOVERNMENTS, IT ESSENTIAL, GIVEN BRITISH WITHDRAWAL IN 1971, THAT IRAN IMPROVE ITS MILITARY CAPABILITIES. THESE CAPABILITIES, HE SAID, WERE NOT DESIGNED TO COPE WITH AN OVERT, ALL-OUT SOVIET ATTACK, AS ONLY THE U.S. WAS IN A POSITION TO DO THAT. HOWEVER, INCREASED CAPABILITIES WERE ESSENTIAL (A) TO GIVE CREDIBILITY TO IRANIAN POSITION VIS-A-VIS SOVIETS THAT IRAN WOULD RESIST MILITARILY ANY ATTACK FROM ANY SOURCE AND WOULD FIGHT TO END AND IN PROCESS DESTROY ITS INDUSTRIAL CAPABILITY SO POTENTIAL ENEMY COULD NOT PROFIT; (B) TO DETER IRAQ, WITH ITS INCREASED MILITARY CAPABILITIES, FROM MAKING MISCALCULATION AND ENGAGING IN AGGRESSIVE STEPS IN GULF AND AGAINST IRAN WHICH COULD ESCALATE INTO HOSTILITIES.

4. HE SAID SOME FRIENDLY OBSERVERS BELIEVED IRAN'S PRESENT TRAINING, STATE OF READINESS, AND MILITARY CAPABILITIES ALREADY INFINITELY SUPERIOR TO THOSE OF IRAQ. HE AGREED IRANIAN FORCES WERE BETTER TRAINED AND SUPERIOR BUT IF IRAQ ENGAGED IN SURPRISE ATTACK, THE FIRST THREE DAYS COULD BE CRUCIAL AND IRAQI ADVANTAGE FROM FIRST STRIKE COULD LESSEN DEGREE OF IRAN'S SUPERIORITY.

5. SHAH SAID IN LIGHT FOREGOING SITUATION, HE WOULD BE

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PAGE 03 TEHRAN 04183 131416Z

DISCUSSING IRAN'S MILITARY REQUIREMENTS WITH PRESIDENT NIXON AND HIS ADVISORS. WHILE OVER-ALL CAPABILITIES MUST BE STRENGTHENED, HE EMPHASIZED PRIORITY HE IS GIVING TO BUILDING UP IRANIAN AIR STRENGTH. THIS WOULD SERVE AS GREAT DETERRENT TO MISCALCULATION AND/OR AGGRESSION IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. HOWEVER, THIS AIR BUILD-UP WOULD OBVIOUSLY REQUIRE ADDITIONAL PILOT TRAINING IN US AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL MAINTENANCE TECHNICIANS TO TRAIN IRANIANS. HE ESTIMATED IRAN WOULD PROBABLY NEED FROM SEVEN TO NINE YEARS TO FULLY TRAIN ITS OWN PERSONNEL. HE WAS QUITE PREPARED TO USE A MIX OF US MILITARY AND US CIVILIAN PERSONNEL (IF LATTER AVAILABLE) FOR WHICH IRAN WOULD PAY (HOPEFULLY FROM INCREASED OIL SHIPMENTS TO UNITED STATES, AS PER FOLLOWING MESSAGE). HE TRUSTED WE WOULD BE FORTHCOMING IN THESE MATTERS.

6. HE CONCLUDED WITH GENERAL OBSERVATION THAT US HAD GONE TO GREAT EXPENSE TO BUILD UP TURKISH CAPABILITIES. TO HIM IT MADE LITTLE GLOBAL STRATEGIC SENSE TO BUILD UP TURKISH DEFENSES AND LEAVE RELATIVE VACUUM IN IRAN WHICH NOT ONLY GUARDED TURKISH FLANK BUT THROUGH WHICH TURKEY COULD BE BYPASSED BY BOTH SOVIETS AND RADICAL ARABS. HE WAS NOT ASKING FOR GRANT ASSISTANCE WUCH AS WE HAD GIVEN AND CONTINUE TO GIVE TO SOME COUNTRIES, BUT FOR COOPERATION, ECONOMICALLY AND MILITARILY, TO PERMIT IRAN TO SHOULDER ITS RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD WITHOUT HAVING TO BE DEPENDENT ON US OR OTHER GREAT POWER INTERVENTION. HE FELT THAT A MOST CRITICAL PERIOD LAY AHEAD AND SINCE IRAN AND THE US SHARE THE SAME BASIC OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES, CLOSER COOPERATION IN THE FUTURE WAS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN IT HAD BEEN IN THE PAST. GP-3.  
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